Amendments to the Claims

1-9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the method is used for verifying availability of the server in a packet-oriented communication network.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein data is transmitted between the server and the first client and the predefinable other clients by a connectionless switching control.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the message regarding the availability of the server is transmitted by the first client to the plurality of predefinable other clients using a multicast message.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the first client sends a message regarding an availability of the server to only the plurality of predefinable other clients within a same subnetwork.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the first predetermined period of time is predefined by a first timer of the first client.

15. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the first timer is reset to a predefinable value after the response to the availability request is received by the first client.

16. (Currently Amended) A control program loaded into a random access non-transitory memory of a client and having code comprising:

a first code portion causing the client to check for a receipt of a message regarding a transmission of a server keepalive test by a first client within a first predetermined period of time;

a second code portion configured such that, if no message from the server regarding the transmission of the keepalive test is received by the client within the first predetermined period of time, the client transmits a message regarding a collective request to a plurality of predefineable other clients;

a third code portion configured to transmit an availability request to a server;

a fourth code portion configured to monitor for receipt of a response comprising a confirmation message responding to the availability request if the server is available; and

a fifth code portion configured to transmit a message regarding an availability of the server to a plurality of predefinable other clients, the message regarding the availability of the server configured to prevent a transmission of an availability request by any of the predefinable other clients to the server for a predefinable period of time if the confirmation message responding to the availability request is detected by a the second device.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A client of a communication network comprising:

non-transitory memory having a control program, the control program defining:

a first device causing the client to check for a receipt of a message regarding a

transmission of a server keepalive test by a first client within a first predetermined period of

time;

a second device configured such that, if no message from the server regarding the

transmission of the keepalive test is received by the client within the first predetermined period

of time, the client transmits a message regarding a collective request to a plurality of

predefineable other clients;

a third device configured to transmit an availability request to a server;

a fourth device configured to monitor for receipt of a response comprising a

confirmation message responding to the availability request if the server is available; and

a fifth device configured to transmit a message regarding an availability of the server to

the a plurality of predefinable other clients, the message regarding the availability of the server

configured to prevent a transmission of an availability request by any of the predefinable other

clients to the server for a predefinable period of time if the confirmation message responding to

the availability request is detected by the second device.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 further comprising the first client checking to determine whether the server is at least able to respond to the availability request with an unavailability message if no confirmation message is received by the first client.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the message regarding the availability of the server is a negative availability message if the server provided an unavailability message or if the server did not respond to the availability request within the third predetermined period of time after the availability request was sent to the server.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 further comprising the first client receiving keep alive data from the predefinable other clients.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 further comprising one of the predefinable other clients transmitting a collective availability request to the server if no message regarding the collective request was received by that client within a predefined time period.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 further comprising the first client storing keep alive data received from the predefinable other clients.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 wherein the control program also defines another device configured to store keep alive data received from the predefinable other clients.

26. (Currently Amended) The client of claim 18 wherein the message regarding the availability of the server is a negative multicast availability message if the ~~an~~ availability message is not received from the server within a predetermined time period after the availability request is sent to the server.

27. (Currently Amended) The client of claim 18 wherein the first device comprises ~~comprised of~~ a transmission mechanism.

28-29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) A method for verifying an availability of a server comprising:

checking for a receipt of a message regarding a transmission of a server keepalive test by a first client within a first predetermined period of time;

if no message regarding the transmission of the keepalive test is received by the first client within the first predetermined period of time, the first client transmitting a message regarding a collective request to a plurality of predefineable other clients;

transmitting an availability request by the first client to the server, the availability request to the server comprising data of the predefineable other clients that responded to the message regarding the collective request within a second predetermined period of time;

preventing transmission of any availability requests by the plurality of predefinable other clients to the server for at least a prescribable period of time; <u>and</u>

after a third predetermined period of time or after receipt of a response to the availability request sent to the server, the first client transmitting a message regarding an availability of the server to the predefinable other clients that responded to the message regarding the collective requests within the second predetermined period of time.

31. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 30 further comprising the first client checking for responses to the message regarding the collective request from the predefineable other clients within the second predetermined period of time.

32. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 30 wherein the message regarding <u>the</u> a transmission of <u>the</u> a server keepalive test is a multicast collective request from a client that intends to directly send a keepalive request to the server.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30 wherein the preventing of the transmission of any availability requests by the plurality of predefinable other clients to the server for at least <u>the</u> a prescribable period of time is comprised of the predefineable other clients that responded to the message regarding the collective request within the second predetermined period of time checking whether the message regarding <u>the</u> an availability of the server is received from the first client within a fourth predetermined period of time.